REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested. Claims 94, 96, 100, 103, 107, 109, and 113 have been amended. Claims 1-93 were previously canceled. Claims 115 and 116 have been newly added. No new matter has been added.

Current Status of the Claims

Claims 94-114 are pending. Claims 94, 96, 100, 103, 107, 109, and 113 have been amended. Claims 1-93 were previously canceled. Claims 115 and 116 have been newly added.

Examiner Interview Summary

Applicant had a telephone interview with the Examiner on 5/31/2007. During the interview, Applicant discussed with the Examiner claim 94 and the cited references. Applicant explained that the cited references do not teach or suggest each and every limitation of claim 94. Agreement was not reached regarding the patentability of claim 94, but the Examiner indicated that claim 103 might overcome the current rejections, particularly with some minor amendments. However, the Examiner also indicated that additional search needs to be conducted before a decision can be made whether claim 103 is allowable. Applicant believes that no amendment is necessary to overcome the current rejections. Nonetheless, Applicant amended independent claims 94, 103, and 109 according to the Examiner's suggestions to move prosecution forward.

In addition, Applicant discussed with the Examiner about the §112 rejections to claims 103-114. Applicant proposed to remove the term "simultaneously". The Examiner indicated that such removal would overcome the rejection.

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Claim Rejections - §112

Claims 103-114 stand rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, for being indefinite. Without admitting the propriety of the §112 rejections, Applicant removed the term "simultaneously" from the claims. Thus, the issue regarding the §112 rejections is moot.

Claims Rejections - §103(a)

Independent claims 94, 103 and 109 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Tso (U.S. Patent no. 6,088,803) in view of Bates (U.S. Patent no. 6,721,721). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

Claim 103, as currently amended, recites:

103. An apparatus comprising:
     a processor;
     a mass storage facility, the mass storage facility storing a plurality of files;
     a network interface through which to communicate with a plurality of clients;
     a memory coupled to the processor, the memory storing instructions which when executed by the processor, cause the processing system to perform a process, the process comprising:
          receiving requests for the plurality of files from at least one of the plurality of clients;
          in response to the requests for the plurality of files, requesting a plurality of cluster devices external to the apparatus and to the plurality of clients to scan the plurality of files for viruses, said requesting including sending an identifier and path of each of the plurality of files to the plurality of cluster devices; and
          receiving results from the plurality of cluster devices regarding the scanning of the plurality of files; and
          responding to said at least one of the plurality of clients regarding the requests according to the results.
(Emphasis added).

In contrast, Tso and Bates, individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest the above emphasized limitation, namely, in response to the requests for the plurality of files,

requesting a plurality of cluster devices external to the apparatus to scan the plurality of files for viruses.

Tso discloses that a network device residing between a client and a content server as shown in Figure 1 of Tso intercepts a client request for a file stored on the content server. Tso further discloses that the network device, without being requested by the content server, initiates the scan of the requested file for viruses. In contrast, the above emphasized limitation of claim 103 essentially recites that the claimed apparatus (e.g., a storage server) requests external cluster devices to scan files requested by clients.

Bates also does not teach or suggest the above emphasized limitation. Bates discloses scanning a plurality of websites to determine whether each of the websites is virus free. The scanned results are stored into a central database accessible by a search engine. When a user searches the plurality of websites (for a term, for example) through the search engine, the search engine returns a list of search results (e.g., websites). The search engine also returns virus scanning information regarding each search result to a user so that the user may decide whether to access a particular search result. As disclosed in Bates' Figures 3-6, virus status information may be obtained from three different sources, a web crawler 42, a virus checker 52, and a virus plugin 29 (shown in Figure 1). However, as shown in Figure 1, neither the virus plugin nor the virus checker may be considered as external to the server 50 (maintaining the website) and to the client 20 (requesting access to the website). As to the web crawler 42, as disclosed in column 12, lines 46-51, the web crawler 42, without being requested by a website (corresponding to a URL), initiates the scan operation of the website. Thus, it can be seen that Bates does not teach or suggest, in response to the requests for the plurality of files (i.e., files of a website), requesting a plurality of cluster devices external to the apparatus (i.e., server 50 as shown in Figure 1 of

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Bates) and to the plurality of clients (client 20 as shown in Figure 1 of Bates) to scan the plurality of files for viruses.

At least for the foregoing reasons, claim 103 and all claims which depend on it are patentable over Tso and Bates.

Independent claims 94, 109, and 115 each recites a limitation similar to that discussed above for claim 103. Thus, for similar reasons, claims 94, 109, 115 and all claims which depend on them are patentable over Tso and Bates.
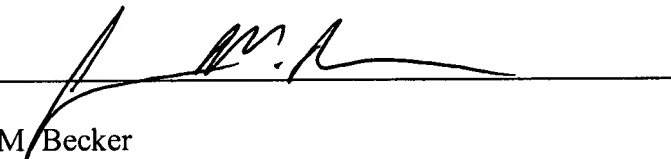
For the foregoing reasons, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is earnestly requested.

If any additional fee is required, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 5, 2007

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